GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:809
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2005
BAN ON INDIAN TV CHANNELS IN BHUTAN
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bhutan has imposed a ban on relay of several Indian TV channels in Bhutan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of those TV channels which have been banned in Bhutan alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) & (b): Cable operators of Bhutan had taken off air the following foreign/Indian channels in Bhutan from April 1, 2005:

- FTV
- Ten Sports
- All regional Indian channels like SUN TV, Asianet, ETV Bangla,
- News channels like Aaj Tak, Zee News.

There was no formal directive from the Government and the above decision was taken by the cable operators themselves, following a series of articles which appeared in the media in Bhutan.

(c): As per these newspapers articles, the widespread feeling in Bhutan was that some channels were culturally degrading and were undermining Bhutanese cultural values, besides distracting students from their studies.

(d): The Indian Embassy in Bhutan has taken up the matter with the Government authorities both formally and informally, and most of the regional and news channels have since been restored.